GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
EXTERNAL AFFAIRS
LOK SABHA

STARRED QUESTION NO:658
ANSWERED ON:07.05.2003
INDO-RUSSIAN TALKS
IQBAL AHMED SARADGI

Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether India and Russian recently held discussions regarding Iraq war, its impact on the situation in Afghanistan and the anti-terror campaign in the region;

(b) if so, the points of discussions held with the Russian Government on these issues alongwith the outcome thereof;

(c) whether there is a similarity of approach between the two countries; and

(d) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI DIGVIJAY SINGH)

(a), (b), (c) & (d) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN PARTS (a) TO (d) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 658 TO BE ANSWERE 7.5.2003 REGARDING INDO-RUSSIAN TALKS

(a) Yes, Sir.

(b) During the sixth meeting of the India-Russia Joint Working Group on Afghanistan held on 28 March 2003 in Moscow, the two sides discussed, inter alia, the situation in Afghanistan and Iraq. The Minister of External Affairs and Mr. Igor Ivanov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, have also spoken to each other over telephone twice on 23 March and 24 April 2003. Iraq war was also discussed in these two telephonic talks. The two sides shared their views about the military action against Iraq and expressed concern at the humanitarian situation in Iraq. India and Russia share the view that the military action against Iraq should not weaken the resolve of the international community to fight terrorism in Afghanistan and in the region.

(c) Yes, Sir.

(d) India and Russia share views on the restoration of the United Nations` role in addressing issues such as the Iraq problem. India and Russia are of the view that the United Nations should provide an agreed framework for providing humanitarian assistance to the Iraqi people for post-war reconstruction of Iraq. As regards Afghanistan and the anti-terror campaign in the region, the two countries firmly reject and condemn all types of terrorism, based on any ground - political, religious or ideological - and wherever it may exist. They agree that the countermeasures against this menace should be taken on a comprehensive and sustained basis. Such measures should be directed also against those states, entities and individuals who support, fund or abet terrorists or provide them shelter or asylum to engage in cross-border terrorism. The two countries also agree on the need to strengthen international mechanisms to fight against international terrorism, and in this context they have agreed to work towards the early conclusion and adoption by the United Nations General Assembly of the draft Comprehensive Convention on International Terrorism and the draft International Convention for the Suppression of Acts of Nuclear Terrorism.